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ANATOMY
OF PLAY,

Written by a worthy and
Learned Gent.

Dedicated to his Father, to
shew his detestation of it.



April. 28

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To the Ingenious Reader.

THis brieſe but pithy diſcourſe concerning Gaming, as it had a ſpeedy birth, ſo was it by the Author of it, doomed to perpetual oblivion. But it by accident coming to my hands, and perſwading my ſelfe the diſſembling of it might be beneficiall to others: I have made bold to bring it out of the grave of obſcuritie: wherein it hath long been, into the view of the Sun that by its communie, it may work the greater effect in the mindes and hearts of ſuch, as ſhall peruſe it, and have been addicted to that vice of vices.

The Author, if he take notice of the publiſhing of it without his leave or knowledge, cannot deſervedly blame me, intending it not any way to his hurt, but the common good, which if it reclaim any, as I hope it may, I have my ends, be the honour, and they the benefit.

Farewell,




To my Father.

Sir,

I Am emboldened to present this small treatise to you, as being due to you by divers obligations, first by that naturall bond whereby I owe unto you my selfe, my actions, my endeavours.

Secondly because I owe to your advice and persuasions, (but especially as I make no question) to your prayers, that present detestation which I have of gaming, whereof this is a consequent effect. Disdain not then to accept this small work, and to acknowledge it as the issue and off-spring of your prayers and counsels, as the Author thereof is of your naturall body: who offers it to your hands with that reverence and humility which becomes,


Your most dutifull Son.

The



The Anatomy of Play.

The Preface,

I Discourse not of Play as some gownemen have done of forren Wars, or discoveries, who, never travelled out of their studies to see either, but speake upon other mens knowledge and fidelity, which must needs weaken their credit, but what I write comes all within the spheare, and compasse of my own knowledge and observations; I write nothing but as the Poet, sayes *quæq; ipse miserrima vidi et quorum pars magna fui*

And therefore justly challenge the better acceptations and beliefe. But here may be objected that my own particular losses may make me more bitter, and satyricall then the case requires.

To this I answer, that I have not lost any so great summes either of mony, credit, or times, as to sharpen my pen, either to passion or invection, neither doth the vexation of any late received losses, strive to vent, and evaporate it selfe into a Sa-

tyre, but I write upon an even and indifferent temper void both of prejudice and passion; one onely caution I will adde, that you must not expect any flourishes of wit or eloquence, for those are proper to workes of fancy; and imaginations, but this is a work onely of observations and experience, and therefore I can promise nothing but truth. Play was first invented, for the recreation of mans minde, and the refreshing of his spirits, having bin tyred and spent with any serious affaires, that so being as it were a bowe unbent, they might recover their former strength and vigor; certainly in this respect, moderate recreation is not onely allowable, but commendable; being of the same use (though in an inferior degree) as rest, sleep, or meat. But your sensuallity easily suffers it self to be overcome by vice, and that is turned to an ill habit, which was first intended for a lawfull exercise, so that Play when it breakes this rule and passeth beyond its due bounds, being no longer παύρη, but ἔργον not recreation but a profession, it is infancy, wickednesse, theft; being seldom unattended by these attributes. I speak then of professed gamesters who

spend

spend their whole time and faculties therein, as in a trade or office; for when Play growes to this excesse, it is so far from good, that it loseth all similitude or resemblance of good, for most vices want not a colour and likenesse of some good to shadow and palliate themselves.

Sape latet vitium proximitate boni.

As covetousnesse hath a resemblance of thrift, prodigality of bountie, drunkennesse of mirth, and gaming of recreation, that nothing can cause greater anxiety or vexation: what broken sleepes, what raving passions, both of body and minde, what secret gnawing, and fretting discontents doth it procure: so that (as I sayed before) losing this name of recreation, it loses all likelihood and similitude of good. To define then what play is (not in the concrete, for so it is a mixture of almost all vices but in the abstract) Gaming is an evil from which arises a most certain losse, and this losse is three-fold, of time, of credit, of money; the first and second unavoidable, the last only casuall but rashly avoided: these three losses have a respective relation to the three parts of man his soul, his person, his Estate.

To begin with the first, and most unavoidable losse, which is of time; being the greatest losse, both in respect of it self, as (being rightly considered) the most precious, of all other things, and in respect of what it hath relation unto, the soul being the most pretious part of man. It cannot but seem a paradox to set this losse of time in the first place, as the greatest and most important, because it is so far from being accounted so by the lovers of Play, that the meere purpose and resolution of losing time is often the cause of all their other losses, is it not their ordinary question, how shall we spend the time? it being thought a matter of that little worth and value, that it seems rather a thing troublesome, and tedious, so that men do even study how to cast it away.

At so low a rate is this inestimable jewell prized. But how happens it, that time if it be so precious, comes to be so neglected and undervalued. Certainly it proceeds only from ignorance: for the use of time is onely to attain to knowledge, now there being that antipathie between knowledge and ignorance, knowledge is not only despised, but the means
also

also of attaining it, which is time: so that time to the ignorant, is as pearl to swine; they know not the value of it, and therefore trample it under foot.; but that it is otherwise esteemed by those who know the use of it, the practice and testimony of all learned men will easily evince. It is the saying of a heathen, and spoken to the shame and scandall of most Christians; *Conteritur vita inter errores brevis, etiamsi dies noctesque bona menti laboremus.*

Our life is consumed in errors, even too short, though we should labour day and night in the ornament of our mindes; it was the complaint of another, *Ars longa, vita brevis*, that our life is too short, for the attaining to the perfection of any of the liberall Arts. Had those heathens but known the great Art which our great Schoolmen dayly teach us, the Art of living and dying well, an Art that can never be too through learned, nor sufficiently practiced, how carefully would they have husbanded every minute of their lives. But so farre are our Gamesters from learning or practicing this Arte, that if happily before their falling into this vice, they had learned any part there-

part thereof, they now learn and practice to forget it, so that they bring upon themselves that curse which our Saviour denounces in another case, from them, that have not shall be taken away even what they have. Of the little time that is lent us, half or more is spent in the necessary service of the body, for the other moytie, few there are who do therein what they should do: many who do nothing at all, and most who do what they should not do, and of this sort are gamsters: and I dare say there is no man who hath wit enough to play, but hath wit enough to know he should not play, being forced in his conscience to say with the Poet: *Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor.*

Certainly for this talent of time that God hath lent us, he will call us, he will call us to an accompt, and if the servant that brought his talent in a napkin, without any improvement were cast into utter darknesse: what shall become of him who not only improves not his talent, but brings not to his Lord so much as his own again, having wasted it upon his lusts and pleasures? And this certainly is the only accompt that most of our Gamsters can give either of their talent of time, or money.

money; I am unwilling to lose time, in lamenting the losse of time, but the losse is so inestimable, and yet so little esteemed off, that it cannot be too much lamented.

To passe then to the second losse, arising from Play, which is credit, and principally respects the second part of man his person. The word credit, as we use it, is of some latitude and admits a threefold Construction, first the report, sufferage, or opinion which the world conceives of any man, more properly and strictly called good name or reputation, secondly that trust or confidence which one man hath in an others honest dealing and good courage; thirdly a mixt credit, having a relation both to a mans person and estate, as for what summes a mans word or bonds may be taken. Take then credit severally or joyntly, in all these senses, and a Gamester forfeites it in them all: first, for reputation or good name, doth not the very name of Gamester stinck in the nostrils of all honest men: although unaccompanied by any of its ordinary attributes, as cheating, lying, blaspheming, and the like. *Tully* when he declaimed against *Catiline*, objecteth as one of his greatest

greatest crimes that he did *alea pernoctari*: and the Synod of *Ausburgh* doth expressly forbid from the blessed Sacrament, amongst whores and Panders: *Omnes qui alearum usui perpetuo vacant.*

And the sixth councell of *Constantinople* peremptorily decrees, that none whatsoever should play at dice, threatening degradation to all Clergy men, and excommunication to all laymen, that should thenceforth attempt it; The words of that Councell are *Can 50. Nullum omnium sive Clericum sive laicum ab hoc deinceps tempore alea ludere decreuimus, si quis autem hoc deinceps facere ab hoc tempore aggressus fuerit, si sit quidem clericus, deponatur, si laicus segregatur.*

Many are the Councils Cannons: and Statutes of this and other Realms to forbid it, yea even *Mahomet* himselfe, in his *Alcaron*, who otherwise allowed all sensuallity.

Judge then whether the bare name of a Gamester be not of it selfe sufficient to blast any mans reputation.

Take then credit in the second sence, for trust or confidence reposed by one man in another, which also is of three sorts: either of a Prince to his subject, of a

father to his sonne or a Master to his servant.

For the first, how unfit Gamsters are for the managing any affaires of Estate, I cannot omit two notable examples of the ancients.

Chilon being sent from *Lacedemon* to *Corinth* to Treat of a league between these two Commonwealthes, and finding the Rulers Playing at Dice, returned without speaking of his Commission, saying, that he would not staine the glory of the *Spartans*, with so great Ignominy, as to joyne them in society with Gamsters. The second was a law amongst the *Thebans*, that Merchants should not have to doe in the Government of the Commonwealth.

And if Merchants were forbidden, consequently Gamesters who are the meanest sort of Merchant adventurers, and I am sure the reasons my Author gives serve better against Gamsters then any other Merchants. *Primum quia Consuetudine, & inclinatione avari ideoque facile, publicam rem in suam vertunt.*

2. *Quia parum magnanimi & splendidi, & ut ait Aristoteles parum generosa haec ratio vitae, & virtuti adversa Ter-*

sic quia in publica persona auctoritatem inminuit. First because, by custom and inclination they are covetous, and therefore apt to convert the publique wealth to their own private secondly, because they are seldom nobly minded, and as *Aristotle* saith, this course of life is nothing generous, and is repugnant to vertue thirdly, because in a publique person it diminisheth authority: for the second sort of trust, which is from a father to his son: what wise Parent will trust a son either with the fruition of a present or the possibility of a future estate, whom he sees addicted to Gaming, unlesse he be willing to behold the utter subversion and ruine of his family and estate, and the fruit of all his labours and cares vanish into nothing.

This I need not seek to proove, so many wofull examples make it to manifest and nourious.

For the third sort of trust which is of a Master to his servant, what Master would give bread to a servant that is a Gamester, for if he manage his Masters affairs and have either money of his in his hands, or other his goods committed to his charge, and that he chance to lose his own, he will play upon his Masters purse hoping

to recover himselfe, and if peradventure he continue still on the losing hand, and hath not where withall to pay, he runs himselfe into greater danger then before, hoping that luck will turn and so come to relieve his losses: But say he is not trusted with any thing of his Masters, nor hath ought of his to lose, yet it is not possible that he should assist at these houres when he ought to give attendance, nor will he be in the way to be found, when need requires.

Thus much for the second sort of credit, which is a trust or confidence reposed by one man in another, and is threefold; either from a Sovereigne, to a subject, a Father to a son, or a Master, to a servant, of all which a Gamester makes himselfe incapable.

The third sort of credit, which is for what sums a man may be trusted either upon word or bond comes now to be spoken of: A gamester certainly of all men is most unfit to be trusted, because his estate is so uncertain, for though it be never so great this day, it may be nothing to morrow; as the Poet said well.

*Quem dies vidit veniens superbum, hunc
dies vidit fugiens jacentem.*

A gamester is *homo fluxa fidei* a man of a fleeting credit, and as *Iacob* said of his first born *Reuben*, is like the waves of the sea, which as they are either raised into mountaines or sunk into vallyes by every gust of winde: so is a Gamesters Estate, and credit by every gust of fortune.

Again, a Gamester resembles the waves of the sea in another property, for naturally they are alwayes either ebbing or flowing, so is a Gamesters Estate and credit, though with this difference, that in the sea after a ebb, constantly follows a flood, but a Gamesters Estate commonly ebs many times before it flowes once.

Again, no man will take the word of a Ward or Heor, though their Estates be responsible, because they are under their Guardians; thus fares it with Gamesters, who make themselves wards to fortune, giving over the managing and disposing of their whole Estates to this their goddesse guardian, who commonly deales as ill with them as any guardian the King or Law imposeth. Thus have I run over the second generall and unavoydable losse arising from Play which is of credit, and principally hath relation to the second part of man: his person.

To passe then to the third losse spring-
ing from Play, which is of money, and
principally respects a mans Estate, though
I have before noted it, as only casuall,
yet so great an ods there is that where one
man hath raised or augmented their estates
by Play, more then an hundred have ut-
terly ruined themselves: I speak here of
Gentlemen who either have present, or are
heires to future Estates, not of those pro-
fessed cheaters who like robbers upon the
spoiles and ruine of the Commonwealth;
this affection of mine though it may seem
strange, yet is it confirmed by dayly ex-
amples, and if rightly considered stands
not without good reason. The first and
chieftest reason of which I shall have more
occasion to speak of hereafter, is the want
of Gods blessing upon money so ill got-
ten.

2. Because great store of money is
as a lure to draw together all the birds of
prey, so that if a man of Estate be addict-
ed to Play though he understand the ways
thereof never so well, yet so many Stra-
tagemes, plots and traps, will be layed to
insnare him, that it is impossible to escape
them.

Thirdly because men that are either of good parts or Estates and have any nobler thing then Play to busie their wits, or set their mindes on work, Play upon great disadvantage with those whose wits studies, and faculties, are onely bent that way.

Fourthly, Because men of quality have alwayes some respect to their reputation, and having lost any reasonable sum will rather let it goe, then seek any indirect meanes for the regaining it, whereas needy Gamesters having little or no credit, upon losse, will not forbear any shift though never so base, or unworthy for the recovery of their losses.

5. And lastly winning commonly brings a man into a vein of great expence, and drawes together many needy persons to attend on him, for money that comes so lightly, goes as lightly; but upon losse nobody will either help him or pity him, for losses that come by a mans own neglect or folly (as loss by play doth) are less compassionated, then those that come by casualty; and here I cannot but relate a story of mine observation, which I think wil not be impertinent. I was wont to ac-
com-

company a Gent. to the house of a great Lady, where commonly meeting other company they fell to play, the Gentleman upon winning was very free and open handed to the servants, so that if they sat up all night, not a servant would go to bed, but when they broke up Play, the Butlers would be ready to present him with wine or beere, the Pages and Lackies one would hold up the hanging, another hold open the door, another light him down the staires, and be ready to do all offices expecting their reward.

But if the Gentleman were a looser, and like to continue so, they all get them to bed, and he might stumble and break his neck down the staires, for any help he should have of them, not one of them being to be seen, making good that of the Poet.

Nullus ad amissas ibit amicus opes, so that a mans winnings are as it were in jeit, but his losses alwayes prove in earnest.

The examples of families and Estates ruined by Play so far confirm this that (I verily beleieve) that all others of expence layed together have not bin the overthrow of so many Houses as Play alone. I have

observed these five ordinary wayes of wasting mens Estates : drink , Women, Carelesnesse, great expence, Gaming, not mentioning those Casualties which are unavoidable and proceed not through a mans own neglect, as losse by fire, losse by Sea , Law Suites, and the like , but to speak of these five which proceed from a mans own folly.

First, as for drink no great Estate was ever spent therein , without the concurrence of some other vice , it being rather prejudiciall to the body then the Estate.

For Women 'tis certain they have been the ruine of many houses, but seldom unlesse accompanied by other vanities, as brave apparrell, rich presents, sumptuous banquets, and the like. By carelesnesse tis true many Estates are sunk which commonly happens by the neglect or dishonesty of servants and Officers, but this comes but by little and little ; and if in time perceived , is easily redressed.

For great expence it is commonly the error of youth, comming suddenly to great Estates (as hungry stomackes coming to plenty of meat) to surfeit and over shoot

shoot themselves ere they are aware, and though some Estates have fallen by it, yet time and experience many times make up the breach.

Last of all comes Play, which being layed in the scale, will outweigh all the rest. All this above named are like consumptions and lingering diseases, that weaken and waste a mans body by degrees, and if taken in season may be prevented, but play like an Apoplexy, or Pestilent infection strikes a man dead at a blow, and is not unfitly compared to Gun-Powder at one blast, blowing up whole families and Estates: Other wayes of spending have some correspondence with the wayes of getting, for as money comes in by little and little, so it goes out and may be as long in spending, as it was in getting, But by Play, the labours and fruits of many yeers, may in one night be dissolved and come to nothing; for play brings to a man, as *Aristotle* saith, sudden destruction; Lastly as other wayes of expence cannot without a kind of Harmony and agreement amongst themselves

selves ruine a man, this of Play, (be he otherwise never so temperate, never so chaste, so wise, so thrifty) of it self is able irrecoverably to undoe him.

Thus I have gone over the three most notorious and generall effects and consequents of play, losse of time, losse of credit, losse of money.

There remaines some other inconveniences, which come not under any of these three generall heads, yet are they not so great and intrinsick, but that they fall under popular observation.

The first of these, is the great disadvantage which arises from the very end of Play.

The end of Play is either to win or lose, but if there be more unhappinesse in losing then happinesse in winning, this makes the disadvantage: but that it is so is most apparent: consider if a man have a competent Estate wherewith to live plentifully and contentedly, suppose hee double this Estate by Play, it adds but little, nay it rather diminishes his former Estate; but if he lose halfe of
what

what he had before, what dayly occasions of discontent arise, when he sees himself abridged of his wonted plenty.

But to make this more apparent, by an example; suppose a man have a 1000.*li.* whether it he make this one an 100000.*li.* is his happinesse greater, then his misery would be, if he lost all and should make it nothing? no questionlesse, nay the misery is as much greater, then the happinesse would be, as the 100000.*li.* is greater, then the 1000.*li.* for happinesse and misery being only comparative, all men that have more, nay many men that have not so much, may be more happy then he, but no man can be more miserable, therefore is the misery greater then the happinesse. This rule holds good also in Philosophy: For it is a maxime that there is a neerer proportion between something and something, then between something and nothing; so that the proportion is neerer between a 1000.*li.* & 2 penny, then between a penny & nothing; therefore to be brought from a small estate to none is more bad, then to come

from a small one to a very great one is good, then is the disadvantage, in the very end of Play, more then 100. to one,

Secondly, Another inconvenience is, that the continuall use of Play, robs a man of all pittie, charity, and naturall affection, being hardened by dayly seeing one another undone, and ruined, as souldiers being continually used to blood, grow thereby mercilesse.

No man comes amisse to a Gamster, whether, Brother, kinsman, or friend, of whom he may make any advantage, being so remote from all pity, that when they see one falling, they will rather precipitate, and throw him head-long, then offer to help, or hold him up.

Thirdly, Another inconvenience, is that he that wins is bound to give the loser leave to speak; to endure many bold and intemperate Actions, to beare with many indiscreet words, and uncivill behaviour; which he is tyed to suffer, only as a Winner, not as a man of honour, who in things of another

ther nature would resent the least wrong that is done to him ; besides many suspitions and traducements of his Play be it never so fair.

Fourthly, Another inconvenience is, that when a man hath lost he is liable to be insulted over, laughed at, and scorned by them who have won, which is worse to be endured, then the losse of the money it selfe, verifying that of the Poet, *Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se quam quod ridiculos homines facit.*

And with this will I close the first part of my discourse, wherein I have onely spoken of Gaming as it trenches upon morality, and civility ; Now will I speak in a word, how hainously it is offensive to God.

The profession of Gaming is little lesse then professed Atheisme, for it is not onely a manifest distrust, but an open contempt of Gods threats, his promises, and his providences : If God speak nothing vainely, then much lesse falsly ; and if all his promises are yea and Amen, is it not a strange presumption

sumption to slight and despise them; hath not God pronounced that goods ill gotten shall not prosper? yet the Gamester laughs in Gods face, and sayes secretly to himselfe, I will try whether they will prosper or not, say God what he will: hath not God pronounced a woe to them who eat, drink, sleep and rise up to play? yet is this the whole life of a Gamester? hath he not promised to all that relie upon him, that they shall want nothing that is good? yet the Gamester makes flesh his arm, and relies upon his own Art and Fortune, neither imploring the Divine blessing, nor acknowledging any thing they obtain from thence, but that comes to passe with them, which the Prophet speaketh; *Latantur exultant, immolant plagis suis, & sacrificant reti suo.* Certainly there is no one vice that so desperately affronts God in the breach of almost all his Commandements. As for the first and second, Is not God pulled out of his Throne, and the Idol of fortune deified, and set up in his stead?

But

But for the third, oh how is that most precious name rent, and torn in curles, blasphemies, execrations, yea even to perjury it selfe? for the fourth, I never knew any Gamester a Sabbatarian; and although publike Authority forbids the publike exercise of Gaming, yet is it as frequently used in private on that day as any other; for the fifth, I know none that have any either Religious or honest Parents, but they dissuade and command them from Play; then consequently it is a disobedience to them: for the sixth, It is often the occasion of mentall murther, yea sometimes of actuall, and once (that I remember) of selfe murther.

To passe to the eighth, Gaming is a kind of professed theft and little differing from that on the high way; onely one is by force, the other by fraud.

But for the tenth, it is so directly repugnant to that, that the most innocent play can scarce avoide the breach of it, for though a man play with his Childe or servant to whom he must restore more then he wins, yet is there a
strange

strange instinct of coveting and desire of winning.

Thus have I briefly shewed how play doth either directly or indirectly oppose eight of Gods ten Commandments : and if any other sin can be produced of so great a latitude to the making up whereof there is such a confluence and concurrence of so many other sins, I will be willing hereafter to think play no sin : I will onely here add a quære or two and so conclude.

First, Why should play be more used in the night time then in the day, considering the night is a time of rest both to the body and minde.

Play certainly is a work of darknesse, and herein Gamesters are like beasts of prey, which rest all day and goe abroad in the evening ; as the psalmist saith.

Thou madest darknesse, that it might be night, wherein all the beasts of the Forrest doe move. The Lyons roaring after their prey &c : the sun ariseth and they get them away together, and lay them down in their dens.

Man

Man goeth forth to his work and his labour untill the evening.

Thus fares it with Gamesters who turn day into night, and night into day: inverting the course of nature: herein rather imitating Lyons and beasts of the forrest then men who follow their honest labours.

My second quære is, why in this as in most other dangers one man should not beware by anothers example, nay not by their own, the fish will scarce cometwice to the hooke, nor the bird to the net; having once escaped:

But men having been often taken in this snare have not the wit of fishes, or birds to avoid it: certainly this is a great master piece of the Devil, first to worke upon the weaknesse of mens inclinations, being of themselves too prone to evil, having thus far prevailed to win a man to play, he then musters up all his Arts and Tentations fearing to lose so fast an hold, and so great an advantage, as when he hath made one a Gamester.

So that a man having entered into
this

this course cannot without Divine assistance retire; the way being like (if not the same way) that leads to hell, as *Virgil* well describes it.

Facilis descensus Averni,

Sed revocare gradus, superasque evadere ad auras.

Hic labor hoc opus est.

Thus have I performed this short exercise of my pen, having onely deciphered this enchanting *Circe*, but in a small table, and in a draught, leaving it to some more curious hand, to draw her in a larger proportion, and in more lively colours, that so being the more discovered, she may be the more abhorred.



Aprill 21. 1651.

Imprimatur.

John Downname.

